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R E P L Y

T O

Dr. Delwey's Address,

DELIVERED AT THE

E L M T R E E ,

S H I E F F I E L D , M A S S .

With Extracts from the same.

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CHARLESTON, S. C.  
PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.  
FOR DISTRIBUTION.

1856.



REPLY

TO

Dr. Dewey's Address,

DELIVERED AT THE

ELM TREE,

SHEFFIELD, MASS.

With Extracts from the same.

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WALKER, EVANS & CO.,  
STATIONERS AND PRINTERS,  
No. 3 Broad-street,  
CHARLESTON.

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## PREFACE.

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IN compliance with the wish of a number of gentlemen, the publishers offer to the public, in pamphlet form, the reply which lately appeared in the Charleston Courier to Dr. DEWEY's remarks on Slavery. The pamphlet embraces a few additional passages by the author of the reply, on one or two topics in the remarks not before noticed. The publishers have also included the remarks themselves, as given in the Charleston Mercury of the 18th October, from Northern papers. They are extracts from the address delivered by Dr. DEWEY at the Elm Tree, in Sheffield, Massachusetts, in September last. It is presumed that they are correct, and that a reference to them may be convenient to the readers of the reply.

NOVEMBER 7th, 1856.





## TO THE REV. ORVILLE DEWEY.

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“IN the right of your own poor thought,” which, you say, “cries to heaven in its very weakness,” you have denounced Southern society, in your Elm Tree oration. Your friends, in this region, thought themselves able to say that you would not esponse the vulgar topics of the multitude; that your literary taste and gentle philosophy would keep you aloof from the coarse stimulant which so much delights the passions of the people around you; that you would not, at least, seek an opportunity for indulging their gross appetite for abuse on Southern manners and morals. But we are not surprised that the confidence has been misplaced. The occasion was too alluring—the exciting subject, the sympathetic audience, the obvious expectation produced by your sojourn for two winters in the very heart of Southern society, in the midst of Southern families, with every opportunity afforded by their unsuspecting hospitality for marking the omissions and commissions of Southern life, and registering the misdeeds of the Legrees, which you have detected,—all this involved a temptation which it would be unreasonable to expect you to resist. Your virtues are not ascetic. Why should you refrain from gratifying the eager appetite for detraction on the South which pervades your people? Why impose on yourself an unprofitable self-denial in reference to those whom you never expect to see again? You have already reaped all the fruits that the Southern field directly produces, and it was sound philosophy to secure from it the indirect advantage which its offences afford. Your condemnation of the South gives pleasure to your friends, and profit to yourself. It would be foolish to expect that an idle

motive of delicacy should be allowed to debar you from so much enjoyment.

But although not surprised, we are nevertheless grieved at your Elm Tree declamation. It strikes us as, somehow, not in strict accordance with true moral taste and sound judgment. There is in it something not easily reconciled with the position, so lately held among us, which has enabled you to say, "the planters confess this." "the Southern gentlemen admit that"; it has done general harm. The advantage which your visit gave you for preparing materials in the South for a speech in New England could hardly be used as you have used them, without injury to the great cause of hospitality and social life. It must produce distrust in the South on all future occasions. They received you with unsuspecting cordiality; your seizing the first opportunity to assail them may serve to close their hearts and houses against future lecturers from the same quarter. People do not ordinarily invite detraction to their homes, however willing to be hospitable. You have added another obstacle to those before existing in the way of social intercourse between the two sections of the country. The reflection must be painful to every man. The worst would avoid it. It reminds us of the Eastern story of the *Emir* and his horse. The *Emir Hamid* was wealthy and charitable. Among his riches was a horse, which he valued above them all. The steed was the fleetest and most enduring in Arabia. A neighboring chief envied the *Emir*, and wished to lay hands on his property. In vain the chief used every art of persuasion and offer of value. *Hamid* was deaf to every thing. One day as he was riding his favorite horse in the desert, he saw a man lying on the ground, writhing and groaning and uttering cries and supplications for aid. The *Emir* dismounted and hastened to help the afflicted stranger. At that moment the chief, for it was he, sprang from the ground, leapt into the saddle, and galloped off on his prize. The *Emir*, waking from his surprise, called out to the flying robber to pause for an instant. "My friend," said the *Emir*, "you have gained your end, but, I pray you, never tell any one in what way you have succeeded. It may prevent travellers from doing deeds of

charity by the way side." The story adds, that the plunderer repented, restored the horse, and the parties became good friends ever after. You would rob us of property and good name; whether the attendant circumstances are not similar, and whether the last act of the repentant robber be not worthy of imitation, it is for you to decide.

We can see nothing new or strong in your attack on slavery. Your reasonings, however applauded by your hearers, are feeble and flimsy to us. Notwithstanding your emphatic declaration to the Southern people, "you are in the wrong; you are certainly in the wrong; your judgment is wrong; your course is wrong"; the argument of your speech does not weigh with them a straw, and your solemn assurance is without authority.

"If a man," you tell us, "should throw his lasso, in the hunting grounds of Africa, over the neck of a wild horse and subject him to domestic use, it would be right. But if he should throw his lasso over the neck of a man roving wild and free in the wilderness, should tear him from his wife and children, put chains on his limbs, and sell him into hopeless bondage, we should pronounce that a monstrous wrong." "And no talk," you add, "about civilizing or christianizing or improving the African race, could ever stand against that conviction." It is characteristic of the mode of reasoning which the Abolitionists use, on the subject of slavery, that something is always introduced into the statement which does not necessarily belong to it, and so uses and abuses, substance and accident are mixed up in endless confusion. Divest your statement of the mere rhetoric, the pomp and circumstance, the lasso, the hunting ground, the tearing from wife and children, which would vitiate your argument if thrown into logical form, and it amounts to this—you mean to say that the seizure of a tribe of wild Africans, and transporting them to a country where they will be civilized, christianized and improved, would be a monstrous wrong. This is your proposition, fairly stated, and relieved from the ornaments which a professed rhetorician so naturally finds in his way. This is your position, and, if I were accustomed to deal in ex-cathedra phrases, I would say,

as you say to us, "you are in the wrong; you are certainly in the wrong; your judgment is wrong; your course is wrong." You undervalue the blessings of civilization, the far greater blessings of Christianity, if you think them dearly bought by the restraints imposed, in a Christian land, on heathen savages. You prefer to those blessings the wild freedom of the barbarian, helpless and hopeless, for ages past and ages to come. Are you not confounding the means with the end? The wild man's brute freedom is not the end of existence. Freedom is a means only for reaching the great purposes of human life. These are truth, virtue, sound morals, pure religion, human happiness here and hereafter. The terms of your proposition admit that the wild man reaches them, and can reach them, not by his freedom, but by slavery only. You decide that they are not worth the price thus paid—better a wild free savage, than a Christian slave! You belong to those who "bawl for freedom in their senseless mood," and do not know that they who would be free "must first be wise and good." The freedom that you would preserve has neither wisdom nor goodness. It is license, not liberty. It is the freedom of the wild horse. It is attended with brutal ignorance, superstitions, gross, stupid, devilish, with the cruelty of the canibal, the carnage of endless strife, the horrors, so hideous, of heathen African life. The African who is brought from it to slavery, blesses God for the change. But you think all these things are better, with wild freedom, than civilization and Christianity, with the restraints of slavery in a Christian land. Surely, sir, this is strange doctrine for a Christian teacher. It is not the doctrine of the Apostles and Prophets. Paul and Moses would repudiate it, and brand it as heresy, as hostile to the teaching which accounts all things to be but dross, in comparison with the excellency of a life in Christ. In civilized society we fetter this wild freedom which you so much admire, by the involuntary servitude of the penitentiary, for long years, and for life. We subdue it by the prison, the hangman and the gallows. We limit it, at every turn, in every department of society. Why will you permit these abuses of wild freedom to exist? You take life to ensure order in the State for others, and you think it a monstrous

wrong to restrain the wild freedom of the African savage, in order to impart religious truth to the savage himself. The conquered barbarian gives his freedom for his life. Is the life of the civilized white of less value than the freedom of the savage black? If the lasso is bad, surely the gallows, garote and guillotine are worse. If no talk, as your phrase goes, of Christianity or civilization or moral improvement can justify the taking of savage freedom, can any talk excuse the taking of the civilized man's life?

But suppose your argument sound, and that no talk of giving to the African the freedom with which Christ alone can make him free, will justify us in going into his hunting grounds and depriving him, with lassos, of his wild liberty. This will not affect the merits of the true question. Your statement of the case is not candid. Our fathers, to whose opinion you love to appeal, did not go, as your fancy implies, with lassos, into the African hunting grounds, to make slaves. They found them ready made to their hands. The negroes were slaves already. In all time they have been slaves. Captives in war, conquered slave soldiers, prisoners whose skulls would have formed pyramids or paved the court square of the King of Ashantee or Dahomy—they were saved from slaughter to continue slaves. It is better, you think, that they should die heathens, that their heads should become paving stones for a Pagan potentate, than that they should be civilized, christianized and improved by slavery in a land of Christian liberty. This is your position.

But admit it to be a monstrous wrong to interfere in these enjoyments of African freedom, and to bring the African from the blessings of his native land, under any circumstances, still your argument is wide of the true question at issue. If that question were, shall the slave trade with Africa be re-opened; if your ships were about to go again to the coast of Guinea to bring emigrants after their former fashion, to the Southern States, to be made useful Christian laborers, blessing, with their industry, all the peoples of the world, in a greater degree than the African tribes, taken together, have been able to do since the beginning of their race—if, in obtaining slaves, the crews employed were about to seize upon free men of Africa and



drag them into slavery—then your argument, whatever it may be worth otherwise, would at least have the merit of being to the point. But it is not to the point in the great practical question now at issue. It is like that of Dr. Wayland, entirely outside of the matter in dispute. Dr. Wayland says, “I have wished to make it clear that slavery, or the holding of men in bondage, is always and everywhere a moral wrong, a transgression of the law of the Creator. To put this subject in a proper light, suppose that your family and mine were neighbors; suppose that I should set fire to your house, shoot you as you came out, and seizing on your wife and children, compel them to work for my benefit, without their consent, &c., &c., would I not, in doing so, violate the supreme law of the Creator; would this be to do as we would be done by?” You oppose the same slavery by a similar argument. I will answer the one supposition by another. Suppose, my dear sir, that one of your landless Northern socialists should deliver lectures on the subject of property to those who own farms, maintaining that all appropriation by individuals of houses and lands was a monstrous wrong; that property was theft, and therefore clearly a violation of the moral law. To place the subject in a simple light, suppose that he should say to the audience, your families and mine are neighbors; you seize me with a lasso, or you drag me and my children away from our natural rights; you take what ought to be, in part, my farm, and appropriate to your exclusive use the fruits and fields which are the common gift of nature to all; in doing this, are you not violating the supreme law of the Creator? Would this be doing as you would be done by? Your proposition is, that all property in man is sin, the Socialists, that all property in land is a sin. If he begs the question as to one kind of property, so do you of the other. You think your principle clear, so also does he. You maintain your position by irrelevant suppositions, he does the same. His doctrine is as tenable as plausible, and will be, by and by, more acceptable to your masses, than your own is now.

You both rest on the same fallacy, that, it is wrong to possess a certain property at all, if it is wrong to acquire it by violent

means. We do not advocate arson or murder, or the capture of free men with lassos, as you and Dr. Wayland suppose; we only vindicate our right to the property actually in our possession.

Your mind distorts and discolours every thing connected with slavery. With the declaration that the slave trade is piracy, you connect the assertion that "those who deal in slaves at the South *now* are held infamous and excluded from all good society, and you never talked with a Southern man who did not say, "this selling of slaves is a fearful part of our system."

To call the slave trade piracy is a mere abuse of words. We should perpetrate a similar one to call the slander on the South murder or manslaughter.

Your assertion is an insult to the brokers of the Southern States. It is as groundless as it is reckless. The dealing in slaves, like other branches of business, is dependent for its character on the parties engaged in it, and the mode in which it is conducted. Bank presidents and directors who sell and buy notes and acceptances share, we presume, the first ranks of society; but there are forgers and swindlers dealing in the same wares, in Wall-street, and elsewhere, who would thoroughly disgrace it. You say, without condition or reservation, that in the South dealers in slaves are infamous, and excluded from all good society. Why, sir, we venture to say, they were admitted to your own. You accepted their courtesies, shared their hospitality, enjoyed their company, and found them as refined in manners and morals, as elevated in character and pure in conduct, as the most perfect examples of society in Boston or New York,—we will not say as Dr. Dewey himself, for this would be thought an equivocal compliment by the parties in question.

The appeal you make to the conversation of Southern gentlemen, in confirmation of your assertions, is neither creditable nor admissible. We know how easily the loose language of conversation is misapprehended, warped and changed by the bias of the hearer, especially when that bias is a strong one. If the selling of slaves is a fearful thing in slavery, there are sights far more fearful in your system of free labour. It is a

fearful thing to see women, with scanty wages, prostituting themselves for support. It is a fearful thing to see the hungry hireling asking for work, and unable to get it : knowing that his children starve at home for bread, and unable to find employment by which he must obtain it. It is a fearful thing to see the squalid mass of beggary, in what are called free States, inportunate for alms and consigned to hopeless filth, vice and degradation. It is fearful to visit certain parts of Boston, New York and Philadelphia. It is fearful to see the multitudes of European free labourers who abandon their homes, friends, relatives, parents : decimated by disease on the voyage ; crowding your hospitals, and exhausting the resources of your public and private charities. The selling of the slave is what preserves him from the miseries of the unemployed hireling. It is the mode by which he is transferred from the master who cannot support him to the master who can. There is no interval in which he is unemployed, and none in which he is not secure of food, shelter and clothing. He is never, therefore, in danger of starving to death. When your hirelings are safe from the risk, and equally confident of commanding subsistence, it will be when the laws of free States enable the labourer to demand a new employer before he is dismissed by the old. The selling of the slave is a transfer of the obligation to labour, and this transfer carries with it a right to be supported for himself and his children. It is his labour only that is sold and bought, and not his body and soul, as your writers profess to consider it. His body is as much his own as the hired operative's, and his soul as free to engage in its proper occupation. When your fancy shall be again on the wing in pursuit of the fearful things in slave selling, let it linger for a season on the sufferings of feeble and diseased labourers, thrust out of sight in lanes and cellars, incapable of employment or unable to procure it.

Your main reason for being dissatisfied with the Southern people is, that they have changed their views of slavery. It is a change, you say, that "alters all your moral and political relations with slavery, except one—the old compact of non-interference." How the compact of non-interference makes an exception, it is not easy to understand. For nearly forty



years the North has waged war on the manners, customs and institutions of the South, by every mode in their power—by speaking, writing, robbing them of their property, resisting their efforts to reclaim it, depriving them of their equal rights to the common territory of the Union, and exciting and fostering a spirit of hostility against them. You cannot name one mode of interference which your Northern people have not habitually practised. They have held all other States, in peace, friends, save only the States of the South.

You console and contradict yourself, however, in professing to believe that the change is not universal. Many hold the old opinion, as you think. "We are always mistaking," you say, "partisan zeal for public sentiment, the agitated surface for the conservative depths of society." The inference from this remark is, that the mass in the South is unchanged. Accordingly, you tell us, that "in a company of twenty gentlemen, where the subject of slavery was freely discussed, seventeen out of the twenty retained the opinion you are pleased to approve—the opinion that slavery is an evil; that it must and would die out and disappear from the country; that it should be confined to the rice and cotton fields; that it is here, they could not help it, and must get along with it as they could." Pardon me, sir, for saying this cannot be true. You have mistaken, you have misapprehended their views. If unity of sentiment ever existed, in any country, on any subject, it is in the South, on the subject of slavery. It pervades all parties. It is as nearly universal as public opinion can ever be.

But, suppose your statement to be correct, and the quoted sentence about partisan zeal and public sentiment to be properly applied, what becomes of the change you complain of—the reason by which you justify the alteration of all your moral and political relations with slavery? If three only out of twenty have changed, with what propriety can you say that "a change has come over the spirit of the South?" Is a small minority the South? Because three out of twenty change, do you alter all your relations with the seventeen? Are you not mistaken in supposing that you have altered these relations from any cause arising in the South? The cause is among

yourselves. It is Northern sentiment that is altered. Formerly Southern families could travel in New England, with their servants, without the fear of being robbed; now they are plundered in the first village where they stop to rest. Formerly, the South was the subject of eulogy and fraternity; now every epithet of denunciation and abuse is lavished upon her. Your change is immeasurable from the slave-ship to the anti-slavery pulpit, and anti-slavery legislation. It involves a settled hostility to the Southern States. The Missouri controversy, the Kansas dispute, are the occasions only, not the cause of the war. There are many exceptions, we know; very many, we hope. But you are not of the number. It would be unreasonable to expect it. The moral courage of Lord and Adams is not an every day virtue. It is as rare as it is admirable.

You justify, then, your alteration of moral and political relations with slavery because the South has changed its opinions, and you assure us, at the same time, that the South is not changed; that seventeen out of twenty retain their sentiments; that the great conservative depths of society are undisturbed. You approve of the old idea, that, in the South, negro slavery should be "tolerated," not "espoused," because it would be confined to the rice fields where "it may be modified, where it may die out;" and you condemn the new opinion, as you think it, that slavery is right, because it would extend, because the three millions will become thirty. Under the system or sentiment that you are pleased to tolerate, the negro race would die out; under that which you consider intolerable, it would increase to thirty millions. You prefer the first, we the last condition of the race, as the most humane, to say the least of it. What, in Heaven's name, you ask, are *we* to do with it? All we ask you to do with it, in the case supposed, is not to interfere. For ourselves we have no apprehensions. Thirty millions of blacks will not be one too many for fifty millions of whites. They will grow, you say, in intelligence. We have no doubt of it. We know that every new generation is more intelligent than the old. We think it to be desired, not deprecated. There is an immense distance between the negroes of the present generation and their barbarian fathers. The pro-

portion between the three millions now existing and the three hundred thousand said to have been imported, is the same as between the three millions and the thirty which you seem to anticipate. And yet, there is no part of the world more secure than the South, from disorder and violence. You apprehend from their intelligence servile wars. In the great slaveholding States of antiquity, in Greece and Rome, the rulers of the world and parents of art and science, poets and philosophers were in the number of their slaves; but no servile wars sprang from poets and philosophers. The few that arose were from escaped bands of ignorant and brutal gladiators, led on, perhaps, and excited by turbulent and factious freemen, seeking to trample on the rights of their countrymen. Very few these wars were in number compared with the riots and disorders of hireling States. We apprehend none, except it be from your interference.

We must differ with you, then, as to the future of the black race in America. We desire that it should increase and multiply, living in the continued enjoyment of peaceful homes, giving to the world new comforts and riches, and, to their native land, the promise of brighter and better days. Nor can we understand how a teacher of Ethics, as you are, can hold the opinions you profess. So long as the South only tolerated slavery, you were able to approve; but when they changed from a mere toleration of it as a wrong, to the "espousal" of it as a right, they lost, you say, the sympathy of all men. While they confess that slavery is a sin you are willing to bear with them, but when they defend it as none, you adjudge them to be insupportable. Now, sir, we do not see how a Christian teacher can tolerate or excuse one who lives in the habitual commission of a sin and makes no effort to forsake it. If slavery is a sin, it ought not to exist in a Christian land. It should be abandoned forthwith. If we admit it to be a sin, and continue to practise it, we deserve no sympathy, apology or forbearance from Dr. Dewey. We should have, as we think, far juster claims on him, if, believing that the slavery of the negro race is right, consistent with revelation, conducive to the good of both white and black, we continue, under that

conviction, to hold them as slaves. And this is most certainly the conviction of the Southern people—a conviction growing stronger as the question is more discussed. We ask no favors, no toleration, no sympathy. We want nothing but truth and justice, and if our cause cannot stand consistently with these, let it fall. But, rely upon it, no rhetoric, no solemnity of adjuration, no mock pathetic sentiment, will weigh with us a rush in the discussion. When you declaim at the Elm Tree, we see in the rhetoric nothing but the common places of the Abolition pulpit; when you exclaim, “God forbid that the number of slaves or slave States should be increased,” we are content to abide His will—if He forbid, they will not increase; if they increase, it will be evident that He does not forbid. When you tell us that Southern parents send their sons to Northern colleges, because they think their own home “not a good home for civilization, christianity, morality,” and that they say of their home, when choosing a place of education for a son, “not here, he must not stay here,” you pronounce a libel on the parents of the South which nothing can excuse or palliate. Why, sir, do you not know that, where one youth from the South is educated in a Northern college, five hundred are educated at home; that every year adds to the number of colleges in the Southern States; that in each succeeding year there is a smaller number of young men sent for education to the North, from every Southern State. There are a few, we are sorry to say it, who still send their sons to Yale or Cambridge, either from some idle notion that they are better instructed, not in morals but in learning, or because of old attachments to the Alma Mater where they have themselves been graduated. But you cannot lay your finger on one man who places his preference of a Northern college on the basis you assign—there is not one man among us so base as to traduce the civilization, christianity or morality of his own country. The few who send their sons to Northern colleges are among the very men who are most decided in the assertion of Southern rights, either of property or reputation. We believe that our churches are as pure, our preachers as devout, our people as moral and refined as your own. It gives us

no pleasure to say so, but for one act of violence with us, we will show three with you. The crimes of the United States which are marked with peculiar atrocity—the gigantic frauds, the infernal machines, the blowing up of houses, the burning and robbery of churches, the obstruction of railroads and their reckless management, the murders singularly horrible, where limbs of the victims are burnt, boxed up, thrown into vaults to be fished up at a convenient season; each act a repetition of the murder—these things belong to your latitude, not to ours.

These charges are of record; yours on the people of the South are guess, supposition, conjecture. “I do not know,” you tell your friends, “the body of the Southern people; I am not acquainted with plantation life; the great evils are doubtless there, not in the cities; and I believe that they are great evils. I believe that all candid and thoughtful men among the planters admit it. There may be less cruelty than is often alleged, but there is great cruelty; there may not be many Legrees, but there are Legrees.” Your time was spent in the cities where, as you intimate, the evil is not; you know nothing of the plantations where, you say, the evil, cruelty and Legrees are. All candid and thoughtful men among the planters, you affirm, admit these things, but you did not know, you confess, one in in a thousand of these candid and thoughtful men. You adduce no evidence, you saw nothing, you observed nothing, you think it enough to tell us you believe. You sustain this belief not by facts to prove that the planters are cruel, but by a conjecture or argument to prove that they must be so. “When irresponsible power and violent passions hold the reign over a subject race, we know,” you say, “that there must be cruelty; there must be a certain inhumanity.” It is so; it must be so—that is the sum of what you say. The assertion is without a fact to support it; the conjecture or argument we will proceed to examine.

Irresponsible power is power subject to no restraint. Is the slaveholder subject to none? What are the checks in New England on those who exercise authority over others in the various relations of life, as husbands, fathers, teachers, com-



manders of ships? They are public opinion, religious and moral sentiment, the laws of the land. The same checks prevail here. We are not aware that there is less respect for law and order in the South than the North. The religious or moral sentiment is quite as strong; the laws are as certainly executed. They do not always succeed in restraining the evil passions of Southern men, but are they more successful with your own? If a master here sometimes murders a slave, does it never happen in the North that a husband murders his wife? Why is the power existing in the one case called an irresponsible power, and not in the other? In the murder of the wife, you infer that the criminal has violated all restraints, human and divine; in the murder of the slave, you conclude that there are no restraints to violate. In the murder of the wife, you ascribe the crime, not to the institution of matrimony, but to the villainy of the criminal; in the murder of the slave, you impute it, not to the perpetrator, but to slavery. Why this difference in your conclusions?—because, you say, the slave is of a subject race, the property of the master, and therefore he is more exposed to violence. But this reason operates surely and strongly in the opposite way. We will lay aside all consideration of the higher and gentler relations that naturally spring up between masters and slaves; we will forget, for the occasion, that they are men with human hearts in their bosoms subject to all affectionate impulses, producing, on the one hand, the most unreserved confidence, and on the other the noblest devotion; we will place them on what the politicians call the lowest platform—the master is the owner only, the slave is the property only, or, as your friends love to call him, a mere chattel. It is sad nonsense to call him so; but if he is a chattel, he is a very valuable one. Does this fact exercise no restraining influence on the owner's power? So far from exciting does it not curb the disposition to injure or abuse? The farmer's best horse bears no comparison in value to the negro slave; does the farmer destroy his horse from the mere wantonness of passion; does he maim his ox or his ass? Do the ladies of your State, in a fit of petulance, batter and destroy their valuable plate or jewels—or shall we conclude that the

love of property loses its power in those cases only where the property is most valuable? We learn from frightful revelations in the English criminal courts how this principle of selfish interest has been strong enough to annihilate the ties of kindred and affection, and to sacrifice for gain the ensured lives of relative and friend. If it has this fearful power to destroy, has it no power to preserve? But we disclaim this low view of the relation between the master and his people. It belongs to you, not to us. The relation is fruitful in kind and warm attachments protecting and defending the slave; and to conclude differently, because there are exceptions, would be as wise as to infer that there is no love in families, because there are sometimes discord, hatred and death.

We are sorry to see you adopt the coarse cant of the abolition school, in charging the Southern planter with breeding negroes for sale. Slaves outgrow their homes, and go from Virginia, or are carried, if you please, to a larger field and better soil, as your laborers leave their homes in Massachusetts, or are sent by your aid societies to the fertile lands of the West. In either case it may be said that the old State breeds laborers for the new. The phrase is as applicable in the one as in the other. In both cases it is coarse and in bad taste. It suits the slang of party only. Strictly taken, it is untrue. Neither hireling nor slave State breeds labor for export. You assert it for the South, we deny it, and ask for evidence and proof, not declamation and the stratagems of rhetoric.

You seem to be anxious for our lives and fortunes, and gloomy apprehensions fill your mind as to the future condition of the Southern States. You paint coming events in sombre colors. Nothing can help us. Whether in the Union or out of the Union, we are never to escape the world's abuse and slander. "If you could throw off Northern interference and the Northern connection," you tell us, "and form a republic for yourselves, your republic would lie under the social Ostracism of the whole world." And you adjure us, "for God's sake, to consider what we are doing, and where we are going." Certainly, my dear sir, the world's opinion is worth something, but it is not the voice of God. It is very uncertain, very subject to change,

and is not and never will be the sole or best standard of truth and right. We appeal from it to the law of God. We appeal from it, from what it now is, to what it has been, until lately, always and everywhere, *semper et ubique*, among patriarchs and the nations nearest to patriarchal times, among Jews and Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, Heathens, Mahometans and Christians. Serfage is hardly yet at an end in Germany. It prevails in Russia. The fashion, fifty years ago, was to bring the blacks from Africa; it is now, to carry them there. Can you pretend to say what it may be fifty years hence? Are you willing to make this unstable public opinion the rule of right and test of truth? What, then, will become of the particular church of which you are the boast and ornament? What says public opinion in reference to the tenets and doctrines of the Unitarian Church? Since the days of Arius they have been condemned, utterly, by Catholic, Greek, Armenian, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist. Your church is outside the pale of sound opinion with all christendom. It is "Ostracised" by the whole Christian world, by the most pious saints, by the profoundest sages, by the great body of critics, philologists, teachers, preachers and theologians. They refuse to you the appellation of Christian. In the judgment of all Trinitarian churches, your church is no Christian church. Pray understand me: I do not intend to say one word on the merits of the controversy. But I ask you whether this public opinion of the Christian world has the right or power to decide it? Shall I adjure you, "for God's sake, to consider what you are doing, and where you are going?" You are a small people, not so large, not so compact, not so strong as we are. You are not supported, as we are, by the practices and opinions of nations, always and everywhere, until very lately. Will you submit? Will you leave your pulpit and abandon your creed? Certainly not! You appeal to the Scripture—so do we. You will maintain truth and right, as you conceive it, against the whole world—so shall we. Even your speech and authority do not make us "bate one jot of heart or hope." If, sir, at any future period, you should re-visit the uncivilized, unchristian and demoralized society of the South,



you will find that even your Elm Tree oration, whatever admiration it may have produced in Massachusetts, has aroused among us no other sentiment than aversion and disgust.

You close your remarks on the subject of Slavery by a number of sentences, which amount to repeated asseverations only, that you do not love or admire it. "We do not like it, sirs, that is what we say to all its advocates." It is quite true. That is very much all you do say, in various shapes and forms of words, from Curran's African or Indian sun, to the negro songs of Christy's white minstrels with blackened faces, which you seem to think are composed by Virginia slaves, and which you consider "the strongest anti-slavery speeches you know." They are, without doubt, as good as the best; but the judgment you express of their significance of value, is the most ridiculous notion of modern times.

In taking the stand you have, you are not influenced, you tell us, by the excitement of the day. But, you add, there are ample causes for excitement—the Kansas border war, "the deed done in the Senate chamber, so atrocious that I have no name for it." Never did man more thoroughly mistake his own feelings, motives and character, if, indeed, we are to consider you as being in earnest. You blow hot and cold with the same breath. You profess to stand aloof from the tumult, and trumpet on the seditious, to the fray, at the same time. An unscrupulous declaimer in the Senate chooses to indulge in slander and abuse for the poor reputation of imitating an ancient orator, and he is caned by one of the parties aggrieved. A distinguished gentleman from your own State, while he condemns the chastisement, declares that, if he had made the speech, he would have thought it prudent to carry an iron pot on his head. The punishment naturally followed the offence. It affected neither life nor limb. It mortified the self-conceit, and curbed the arrogance only of an intellectual gladiator. And you speak of it, without a word of censure on the libel that caused it, as an act so atrocious that you are unable to find a name for it. If it had been a murder like the blackest that darkens your annals, you could not describe it in more exaggerated terms. And then you tell us you are not influ-

enced by the excitement of the time. Excuse us, sir, we can neither put faith in the assurance, nor respect the man who makes it. If you share the excitement around you, your declaration is insincere; if you do not, you are the more inexcusable for adding fuel to the flame that threatens to destroy the country.

You profess to believe that "if slavery covered the whole world, it would, in a century, require another planet to sustain it." In the time of the Apostles it did cover the whole world; it covered the world for ages before, for ages after; and yet we are not aware that history speaks of any assistance having been required or sent from our neighbor, the moon, excepting the moonshine, which she now bestows equally on hireling and on slave States. We do not depend on you, either morally, religiously, or physically. Our people go among you to spend money; yours come among us to make it. The South can not only sustain itself, but it finds a surplus to expend on itinerant venders from the North of wares, material or intellectual, clocks or lectures, tin ware or sermons. Yours were not a gift to the South, nor were they considered as absolutely essential to its well being. We have not the huge fortunes of your great merchants, neither have we your sinks of filth, wretchedness and pauperism. We have no millionaires, but we have no street beggars. We have no palaces of brown stone, but we have no poor to farm out to the lowest bidder, as you have in New England.

The South produces and exports cotton, grain, cattle; your State is unable to grow its own bread. I will not trouble you with statistical statements of the productions of the Southern States, productions that, in hundreds of millions, sustain the foreign commerce of the whole country. You do not descend to these ordinary practical views. But we ask attention to one test of the soundness of your opinion, which cannot be mistaken. There are before your eyes two worlds on a small scale; one, of free negroes, the other, of slave laborers; one, made a wreck by freedom, and fast relapsing into all the want, superstition and blood-thirstiness of an African State; the other, a scene of unexampled wealth, prosperity and improvement,

notwithstanding the continued introduction, by Yankee ingenuity, of new African barbarians. To restore slavery to Hayti, would be to restore peace and abundance. To abolish it in Cuba, would be to destroy it. How does your philosophy explain the facts in these two West India planets? Which is the most able to sustain the other? Life deals, not in abstractions, but in practical experiences. These are the guides of statesmen and States.

Your remarks, then, on slavery, are a series of fallacies only.

1st. You prefer the brute liberty of the wild savage to the servitude which alone can give him civilization and Christianity; the savage himself decides differently, and more wisely; you sacrifice the life of the civilized man to preserve civilization, and you think the African's savage freedom too precious to exchange for it.

2d. You misstate the question—it is not whether we shall make freemen slaves by violence, but whether we shall hold those as slaves who have never been free; it is not whether we shall seize on a farm by arson and murder, but whether we shall keep one inherited from our fathers.

3d. You lived in the Southern cities, and admit that no cruelty is found there; you know nothing of the plantations, and assert that they are scenes of evils, cruelties and Legrees. You confess that you did not know one in a thousand of the planters in the South; and you affirm that all candid and thoughtful men among them agree with you in opinion.

4th. You change your moral and political relations with the South, because it has changed its opinions; and you tell us at the same time, that the South is not changed. You prefer the opinion under which slavery would die out and the slaves disappear, and look with horror to their increase in number and intelligence as disastrous to the country, and you forget that this is inhumane; that the slaves have already increased in the proportion you apprehend, not to the danger, but the profit of the country; and that a Christian African is more easily governed than an African savage.

5th. You think it more consistent with sound morality to

believe slavery a sin, and to tolerate it, than to believe it no sin, and to maintain and defend it.

6th. You assert that Southern parents send their sons to the North to avoid the demoralization of their homes; and you know that where one youth goes to a college at the North, five hundred are sent to those at home.

7th. You threaten us with the coming social Ostracism of the civilized world, if we retain our principles; and you disregard the religious Ostracism of the Christian world condemning your own.

8th. You profess to believe that a slave State cannot exist without being sustained; and you know that the great nations of the world, the richest, strongest, most learned, most refined, have been all slave States.

We have resorted to recriminations with pain. We make them in self-defence only. Then, surely, if ever, "to recriminate is just." When we are unjustly, falsely, and scandalously assailed, we owe it to ourselves and to the world's opinion, which you so much revere, to protest against the wrong, and to show the unworthiness of those who make the attack. We lament the necessity. Nothing would induce us to stoop to the vein of remark which such a protest and reply involves but the arrogance that presumes to place the South, for any conceivable cause, material or moral, in a position of dependence on those whose impulses of vanity or calculations of interest can abuse the confidence of social life, and turn its sweets to gall and wormwood. We would gladly return to the mutual respect and confidence that prevailed with the North and South at the close of the Revolution, and for thirty years afterwards. We have no sympathy with those who desire the destruction of the Federal Union. We would joyfully preserve it, and see its great and growing resources devoted, as they are, to the arts of peace, rather than wasted on the necessities of war. And this we say with the perfect conviction that if the South should form a separate republic, it would grow in strength and wealth, compact and complete, *teres atque rotundus*, able to defy all enemies, and to confer benefits on every ally and friend. But to preserve peace and

the Union, your eternal attacks on us must cease. There can be no peace if you are forever presenting to us a sword.

We have no ill will towards you, sir. Your conduct produces no feeling so strong among us as resentment. It would have been wiser and purer for you, we think, to keep aloof, within the serene air of your hopeful and genial philosophy. But if you prefer the slough of party turmoil to the shady grove and smooth shaven green, we can only leave you in your mire, pity your moral taste, and hope to see you and hear you no more.

SOME OF YOUR FORMER FRIENDS.



## EXTRACTS

FROM

### REV. ORVILLE DEWEY'S ORATION.

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IF a man should go into the hunting grounds of Africa, and should throw his lasso over the neck of a horse, and bring it home and subdue it, and subject it to domestic use, we should say it was right; for we believe that God made that animal for our service. But if he should throw his lasso over the neck of a man, roving wild and free in the wilderness—should tear him from his family and his home; should put chains on his limbs and bring him over the sea, and sell him, and his children after him, into hopeless bondage, we should pronounce that a monstrous wrong. And no talk about civilizing, or christianizing, or improving the African race, could ever stand against that conviction. It is a conviction, I say, intrenched in the very breast of humanity; all the world has agreed to call the slave trade piracy; the man with the lasso is a pirate; there is no darker name for crime than slave-trader; the very men who deal in slaves at the South *now* are held infamous, and excluded from all good society; and I never talked with a Southern man who did not say, “this *selling* of slaves is a fearful part of our system.” Well may they say it; and now I say, all this being admitted, can any man in his heart pronounce and feel that this system is a good thing, an excellent thing, an admirable system!

Our fathers did not think so. The colonies protested against it. The men of the Revolution looked upon it as an *evil*, not as a good; and they agreed, North and South together, by an



ordinance, to exclude it from the North-western territory. They never thought—nobody ever thought—that it was possible it might spread far West and South, till it enveloped half the continent. It had retired from the North; it would retreat from the Middle States; it would be confined to the rice and cotton fields; it might be modified there, or it might die out; at any rate it was there—they could not help it—they must submit to it, and get along with it as they could.

But now a great change has come over the spirit of the South; and it is a change which alters all our moral and political relations with slavery, except one—the old compact of non-interference. I do not say that this change is universal at the South. I believe that many hold to the old opinion. We are always mistaking partisan zeal for public sentiment—the agitated surface for the conservative depths of society. I was in a company of twenty Southern gentlemen a year and a half ago, when the subject of African slavery was freely discussed, and seventeen out of the twenty held that it must and would die out and disappear from this country. But it is the determination of certain public leaders, and of a large party at the South, *now* to *espouse* the system; to maintain that it is a good institution, and ought to be perpetual; to demand for the slave interest an equal share in the partition of the States between slave and free labor—an equal share in the Government—a share, not as other property, but *more* than any other property or population in the land; and, in consequence, Texas has been admitted, with leave to form four new States; the Missouri compromise has been broken down; and the most violent efforts are made to introduce and establish slavery in Kansas.

Now, against all this, against the whole opinion and this whole course of conduct, with all my might, I protest. I am an humble individual; I have but little influence to exert; by my profession, or by the public opinion concerning it, I am excluded from all share in the government of the country; but if I had influence and power, I would say to my brethren of the South—if I was confronted with them *now* face to face, I would say to them respectfully, but frankly and firmly, “You



are in the wrong; you *certainly* are in the wrong; your judgment is wrong, your course is wrong; the moment you left the *toleration* for the *espousal* of this system of human slavery, you lost the sympathy of all men; you cannot make it an honored and praiseworthy act *to buy and sell men*; no, no, you cannot; the whole civilized world is against you; it will be against you more and more; even if you could throw off Northern interference or the Northern connexion, and form a republic for yourselves, your republic would lie under the social Ostracism of the whole world. For God's sake, consider what you are doing, and where you are going!" Pardon, my friends, the solemnity of the adjuration. I speak only in the right of my own poor thought, but it cries to Heaven in its very weakness. But I would say to the whole country—consider, and consider soon. If extension—extension of the system—is to go on, the three millions of slaves will in time become thirty millions. What, in Heaven's name, are we to do with them? They will grow in intelligence; they will band in servile wars; it is impossible to hold in safe hands such a tremendous element as this expanding humanity, thirty millions strong. The only safe measure, in my opinion, is to stop this expansion before the mass of evil and peril becomes too unwieldy for our grasp; to contract, not expand, the area of slavery; to let Virginia, and Maryland, and Kentucky, and Missouri become free States—the point to which they are tending—and in due time, either to prepare these people for freedom and emancipate them, or else to induce multitudes of them to return to Africa, and enable them to do it by all the resources of the nation applied to that end. I am not a legislator, but if I were, I would never vote for another step of extension to the slave area, and for such a stand on this question I have the decisive words of Clay and Webster themselves. *I would never vote Kansas to the doom of Virginia—to impoverishment, to poor culture, to breeding and selling men for a living!* I would never vote Kansas to slave labor, which, by long and solemn compromise, was pledged to free labor. If Kansas must come in as a slave State, it would be because I could not help it.

Heaven is my witness that I do not say these things in any unkindness to the South. I know many of its people but to esteem, very highly to esteem and honor them. I do not know the body of them—I am not acquainted with plantation life at the South. The great evils of the Southern system, doubtless, are *there—not in cities*; and I believe that they are *great* evils. I believe that all candid and thoughtful men among the planters admit it. There may be less cruelty than is often alleged, but there is great cruelty; there may not be many Legrees, but there *are* Legrees. When irresponsible power and violent passions hold the reign over a subject race, we know there must be cruelty; and there must be a certain inhumanity; and a passionate self-will, prompt to strike; and an enervating, very fearful self-indulgence nurtured under such a system, especially in the young. Why do Southern parents send their sons to the North to be educated? Let them give the reasons, and they will give a terrible argument against slavery! That cannot be a good home for civilization, for christianity, for morality, concerning which the parent, when choosing a place to educate his child, says, “Not here; he must not stay here.”

I am accounted a moderate man on this subject, as I said before; and I am willing to be thought to speak from the moderate side of the question. I *will* endeavor, for my part, to see both sides of it. I have talked much with good men at the South, who said, and honestly said, “The introduction of the African people into this country, though no blessing to *us*, is a blessing to *them*; it is a grand means, under Providence, for civilizing and christianizing them.” Nay, and strange as you may think it, I have heard the slave-owner himself fervently thank Heaven that his progenitors were brought to this country; because, by that means, he had attained to the Christian’s joy and hope. And I have seen churches that numbered from five hundred to twenty-five hundred colored communicants; and I have seen men and women (holders of slaves) who, even not only humane, but conscientious and considerate towards their people, watching over them, listening to their complaints, giving medicines for their ailments, instructing them in Sunday schools, instructing their children in the week time, laboring

in every way for their comfort and improvement. And whoever would truly describe the life of our Southern people, should not leave out this class, for it is a class. I have listened also to what Southern apologists have said in another view—"that this burthen of slavery was none of their choosing; that it was entailed upon them; that they cannot immediately emancipate their people; that they are not able to take care of themselves; that this state of things must be submitted to for a while, till remedial laws and other remedial means shall bring relief." And so long as they said *that*, I gave them my sympathy. But when they say, "spread this system—spread it far and wide," I cannot go another step with them. And it is not I that has changed, but *they*. When they say, "spread it over Kansas and Nebraska; spread it over the West; annex Cuba; annex Central America; make slavery a national institution; make the compact of the Constitution carry it into all the territories; cover it with the national ægis; set it up as part of our great republican profession; stamp on our flag, and our shield, and our escutcheon, the emblem of human slavery;" I say no, never; God forbid!

In taking this stand I am not influenced by the excitement of the day. I know there are causes for this excitement. There has been a deed done in the Senate chamber, so atrocious that I have no name for it. There is a border war in Kansas, involving evil and mischief and wrong enough to stir the indignation of any just people. But if these things had not been done, I should still take the ground I now take—against the extension of the slave system. It is a wrong to humanity; it is more to the soil. If slavery covered this whole planet to-day, in less than a century it would want another planet to sustain it. It tends to the demoralization of the people. It is in conflict with our free institutions, and with all the ideas of the age. "We do not like it, sirs;" that is what we say to all its advocates; that is the feeling at the bottom of our hearts. Humanity is everywhere rising against it. Did you ever consider the significance of those negro songs that are so much sung in these days? The negro is singing his loves, his domestic affections, his sorrows, into the ears of all the world; and



humanity listens with sympathy. Who would not listen! Are they not the lovers, the holy ties, the sacred sorrows of men? Hallowed shall they be to me—sacred shall be the lot of those who feel them—no matter “what complexion an Indian or an African sun may have burnt upon them.” I would advise the friends of slavery to pass statutes against the singing of these negro songs. They are the strongest anti-slavery speeches I know. But it would be in vain. There is a tide rising in the world that will sweep away this system. The very Czar is meditating the freedom of the slaves in his empire. All the world is demanding the freedom of all men. With equal calmness and confidence I wait the result.



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